the Committee on Balance of Payments Restrictions in. January, 1997, India has been holding bilateral consultations with its major trading partners and WTO Members. Inter Ministerial discussions are also being held to finalise India's plan which will be considered in the WTO Committee in June, 1997.

During the discussions held with the European Commission on 20-21 March, 1997 at New Delhi the European Commission maintained that in view of improvement in the balance of payments situatbn in India there was no justification for continued recourse to the balance of payments cover under Article XVIII,: It of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and that India should announce a comprehensive phase out plan for removal of residual quantitative restrictions maintained on imports for balance of payment purposes.

The foreign currency reserves of India were USD 22.4 billion on 2 May, 1997. Projections of foreign exchange reserves are not maintained.

A meeting of the Indo-EU Joint Commission is scheduled to be held in New Delhi on 12-13 May, 1997 at which issues such as quantitative restrictions maintained for balance of paymcts purposes arc also likely to be discussed.

विदेशों के साथ व्यापार समझौते

3237. **श्री अजात जोगी**: क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) 1996-97 के दौरान सरकार ने विदेशों के साथ कितने व्यापार समझौते किए हैं;

(ख) तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ग) इन समझौतों से भारतीय वस्तुओं के निर्यात में अनुमानत: कितनी वृद्धि होगी?

वाणिज्य मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री बोल्ला बुल्ली रमैया): (क) और (ख) महोदय, वर्ष 1996-97 के दौरान सरकार ने दूसरे देशों के साथ व्यापार और आर्थिक सहयोग बढ़ाने के लिए 4 व्यापार करारों पर हस्ताक्षर किए है। वे देश है: इथोपिया, वियतनाम, त्रिनिदाद, तथा टोबागों और बलगारियां।

(ग)भारतीय वस्तुओं का निर्यात विभिन्न कारणों पर निर्भर करता है। जैसे भारतीय निर्यातकों तथा विदेशी आयातकों के बीच व्यापार सम्पर्क स्थापित करना तथा बातचीत करना और वस्तुओं की लागत प्रतिस्पर्द्धात्मकता और व्यापार करार के फलस्वरुप निर्यात में वृद्धि का अनुमान लगाना कठिन है।

Ban on Import of Plastic Wastes

3238. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the . Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have-banned import of used plastic in the form of waste or scrap,

(b) if sc, the details of norms governing import of plastic wastes tightened by Government;

(c) whether the import of waste or scrap is causing concern for the environment; and

(d) if so, to what extent the norms to tighten import of plastic wastes is going to curb the import of wastes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BALkA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) Under the current Export and Import Policy, the import of used plastic in the form of waste or scrap is not permitted. However, import of such plastic scrap/ waste which constitute those fractions of plastic generated by various plastic processing operations or those fractions generated in the production process of plastic in plant, which have not been put to any use whatsoever and as such can be termed as virgin or new material which can be recycled into viable commercial products using standard plastic processing techniques but without involving any process of cleaning, whereby effluents are generated, is permitted against import licence as per the guidelines/norms as